

## APPENDIX – Social Media Definitions

This appendix contains a collection of popular social technologies and terminology, both general and platform-specific, and is designed for attorneys seeking a basic understanding of the social media landscape.

### A. Social Technologies



**Facebook:** an all-purpose platform that connects users with friends, family, and businesses from all over the world and enables them to post, share, and engage with a variety of content such as photos and status updates. Founded in 2004, the site now has in excess of 1.5 billion active monthly users.



**Instagram:** a visually-focused platform that allows users to post photos and videos. Created in 2010, and later purchased by Facebook, it has approximately 500 million active monthly users.



**LinkedIn:** an employment-based networking platform which focuses on engagement with individuals in their respective professional capacities. Launched in 2002, it now boasts roughly 100 million active monthly users.



**Periscope:** a video-streaming mobile application that allows users to broadcast live video. Created in 2014, and purchased by Twitter shortly thereafter, it has in excess of 10 million active monthly users.



**Pinterest:** a platform that essentially functions as a social scrapbook, allowing users to save and collect links to share with other users. Started in 2010, it has in excess of 100 million active monthly users, majority of whom are female.



**Reddit:** a social news and entertainment website where all content is user-submitted and the popularity of each post is voted upon by the user base itself. Created in 2005, it has more than 240 million active monthly visitors.



**Snapchat:** an image messaging application that allows users to send and receive photos and videos known as "snaps," which are hidden from the recipients once the time limit expires. Officially released in September 2011, it has in excess of 200 million active monthly users.



**Tumblr:** a microblogging platform that allows users to post text, images, video, audio, links, and quotes to their blogs. It was created in 2007 and has more than 500 million active monthly users.



**Twitter:** a real-time social network that allows users to share updates that are limited to 280 characters. Founded in 2006, it has more than 315 million active monthly users.



**Venmo:** a peer-to-peer payment system where users send money from their bank or credit/debit card to another member. Introduced in 2009, and acquired by PayPal in 2013, it handles approximately 10 billion dollars of social transactions per year.



**Waze:** a social-based GPS platform that is based upon crowd sourcing of events such as accidents and traffic jams from its user base. Founded in 2008, and purchased by Google in 2013, it has 50 million active users.



**WhatsApp:** a cross-platform instant messaging service that allows users to exchange text, images, video, and audio messages for free. Launched in January 2010, and acquired by Facebook in 2014, it now has more than 1 billion users.



**TikTok:** a video app for creating and sharing short lip-sync, comedy and talent videos. Launched in 2017, it already has more than 1 billion users and was the most downloaded app in the Apple App store during the first half of 2018.

## **B. Social Terminologies**

**Add:** Process on Snapchat of subscribing to another user's account in order to receive access to their content. This is a "unilateral connection" that does not provide dual-access to both users' content or require the second user to expressly approve or deny the first user's access.

**Automatic Notification:** An automatic message sent by the social media platform to the person whose account is being viewed by another. This message may indicate the identity of the person viewing the account as well as other information about such person.

**Bilateral Connection:** A two-way connection between users. That is, for one user to connect with a second, the second user must expressly accept or deny the first user's access.

**Block:** Refers to a user's option to restrict another's ability to interact with the user and/or the user's content on a given platform.

**Connections:** Term used on LinkedIn to describe the relationship between two users, indicated by varying degrees.

- **1st Degree Connection:** Those who have bilaterally agreed to share and receive exclusive content from one another beyond those available to the LinkedIn community at large.
- **2nd Degree Connection:** Those who share a mutual 1st degree connection but are not themselves directly connected.
- **3rd Degree Connection:** Those who share a mutual 2nd degree connection but are not themselves directly connected.

**Cover Photo:** A large, horizontal image at the top of a user's Facebook profile. Similar to a profile photo, a cover photo is public.

**Direct Message:** Private conversations that occur on Twitter. Both parties must be following one another in order to send or receive messages.

**Facebook Live:** A feature on Facebook that allows users to stream live video and interact with viewers in real-time.

**Fan:** A user who follows and receives updates from a particular Facebook page. The user must "like" the page in order to become a fan of it.

**Favorite:** An indication that someone "likes" a user's post on Twitter, given by clicking the star icon.

**Filter:** An aesthetic overlay that can be applied to a photo or video.

**Follow:** Process of subscribing to another user in order to receive access to their content. This is a unilateral connection as it does not provide access to one's own content.

**Follower:** Refers to a user who subscribes to another user's account and thereby receives access to the latter's content.

**Following:** Refers to those accounts that a particular user has subscribed to in order to view and/or receive updates about the content of those accounts.

**Friend:** Refers to those users on Facebook who bilaterally agreed to provide access to each other's account beyond those privileges afforded to the Facebook community at large. "Friend" may also create a publicly viewable identification of the relationship between the two users. "Friending" is the term used by Facebook, but other social media networks use analogous concepts such as "Follower" on Twitter or "Connections" on LinkedIn.

**Friending:** The process through which the member of a social media network designates another person as a "friend" in response to a request to access Restricted Information. "Friending" may enable a member's "friends" to view the member's restricted content.

**Geofilter:** A type of Snapchat filter that is specific to a certain location or event and is only available to users within a certain proximity to said location or event.

**Handle:** A unique name used to refer to a user's account on a given platform.

**Hashtag:** Mechanism used to group posts under the same topic by using a specific word preceded by the # symbol.

**Home Page:** Section of Instagram users' accounts where they can see all the latest updates from those who they are following.

**Lenses:** Used on Snapchat to allow users to add animated masks to their postings and stories.

**Like:** An understood expression of support for content. The amount of likes received is generally tied to the popularity of a given post.

**News Feed:** Section of Facebook users' accounts where they can see all the latest updates from those accounts which they are subscribed to, *e.g.*, their friends.

**Notification:** A message sent by a given platform to a user to indicate the presence of new social media activity.

**Pinboard:** The term used on Pinterest for a collection of "pins" that can be organized by any theme of a user's choosing.

**Posting or Post:** Uploading content to a social media network. A post contains information provided by the person, and specific social media networks may use their own term equivalent to a post (*e.g.*, "Tweets" on Twitter).

**Privacy Settings:** Allow a user to determine what content other users are able to view and who is able to contact them.

**Private:** State of a social media account (or a particular post) that, because of heightened privacy settings, is hidden from the general public.

**Profile:** Accessible information about a specific social media member. Some social media networks restrict access to members while other networks permit a member to restrict, in varying degrees, a person's ability to view specified aspects of a member's account or profile. A profile contains, among other things, biographical and personal information about the member. Depending on the social media network, a profile may include information provided by the member, other members of the social media network, the social media network, or third-party databases.

**Public:** Information available to anyone viewing a social media network without the need for permission from the person whose account is being viewed. Public information includes content available to all members of a social media network and content that is accessible to non-members.

**Repin:** On Pinterest, where a user saves another's pin to their own board. Similar to a "retweet" on Twitter.

**Restricted ("private"):** Information that is not available to a person viewing a social media account because an existing on-line relationship between the account holder and the person seeking to view it is lacking (whether directly, *e.g.*, a direct Facebook "friend," or indirectly, *e.g.*, a Facebook "friend of a friend"). Note that content intended to be "restricted" may be "public" through user error in seeking to protect such content, through re-posting by another member of that social media network, or as a result of how the content is made available by the social media network or due to technological change.

**Retweet:** A Twitter user sharing another's "tweet" with their own followers.

**Snap:** The term used to describe an image posted to the Snapchat platform.

**Social Media (also called a social network):** An Internet-based service allowing people to share content and respond to postings by others. Social media may be viewed via websites, mobile or desktop applications, text messaging or other electronic means.

**Social Network:** Online space consisting of those who personally know one another or otherwise have agreed to provide them with access to their content.

**Social Profile:** A personal page within a social network that generally displays posts from that person as well as the person's interests, education, and employment, and identifies those accounts that have access to their content.

**Status:** The term for a user posting to the user's own page which is simultaneously published on the home page of a particular site, *e.g.*, Facebook's News Feed.

**Story:** The term used on Snapchat and Instagram for a designated string of images or videos that only are accessible for a period of 24 hours.

**Subreddit:** A smaller sub-category within Reddit that is dedicated to a specific topic or theme. These are defined by the symbol “/r/”.

**Tag:** A keyword added to a social media post with the original purpose of categorizing related content. A tag can also refer to the act of tagging someone in a post, which creates a link to that person’s social media profile and associates the person with the content.

**Timeline:** Section of Twitter users' accounts where they can see all the latest updates from those whom they are following.

**Tweet:** The term for a user’s post on Twitter that can contain up to 280 characters of text, as well as photos, videos, and links.

**Unfollow:** The action of unsubscribing from receiving updates from another user.

**Unfriending:** The action of terminating access privileges as and between two users.

**Unilateral connection:** A one-way connection between users. That is, a user may connect with a second without the second user connecting with the first or requiring the second to expressly approve or deny the first’s request.

**Verified:** This refers to a social media account that a platform has confirmed to be authentic. This is indicated by a blue checkmark and is generally reserved for brands and public figures as a way of preventing fraud and protecting the integrity of the person or company behind the account.

**Views:** This simply refers to the amount of people who have watched a certain video or story.

**Wall:** The space on a Facebook profile or fan page where users can share posts, photos and links.